National Institute Annual Report

For the period May 2014 – April 2015

Introduction

Zabi and Elizabeth Njang Institute Boards are pleased to present to you report of activities on the development and deployment of human resources for the purpose of community building process in the country for the outgoing year. The year started with focus on achieving the goals set with specific strategies. The Boards accompanied all the Regional Institute Coordinators as well as cluster, sector and assistant coordinators in the implementation of plans made last year. Goal clusters were also followed by the Boards through their Regional Institute Coordinators in collaboration with Regional Baha'i Councils and Auxiliary Board members with the view of establishing programmes of growth at different levels of intensity in all the 46 goal clusters in the country. The results thus achieved did not meet the projected goals due to some challenges and restructuring of membership on the two Boards. This report calls for consultation and suggestions among the delegates gathered at this convention on how we can all be involved in the implementation of plans in order to achieve the remaining goals of the Five Year Plan.

Administration

The Boards met regularly in collaboration with Institute National Desk to look at plans, reports and analysis as a way of improving on the accompaniment of Regional Institute Coordinators and the entire institute process. After the analysis, guidance and support are given to the coordinators based on their strength and capabilities. The two Boards were initially composed of Regional Institute Coordinators and Auxiliary Board members but half way through the year, National Spiritual Assembly in consultation with the Counsellors reviewed the membership on the Boards by releasing Regional Coordinators to allow them focus on field work. This further strengthened the Boards in accompanying and following up with plans of Regional Institute Coordinators down to the clusters.

An orientation was organised for the newly appointed Board members which gave them a better understanding of their role in strengthening the educational process.

The on-going support of the Boards by the Institute National Desk under the guidance of the National Spiritual Assembly has added impetus to the Boards' understanding of their role especially in the area of accompaniment of Regional Coordinators.

A retreat was also organised in the outgoing year for all Regional Coordinators. This was aimed at rekindling enthusiasm in the coordinators for effective and joyous service.

Coordination

There are currently six (6) Regional Coordinators with one being part time and seven (7) full time cluster coordinators with a host of experienced individuals helping with coordination and accompaniment. Coordination is vital to the expansion and strengthening of the educational process. The Boards are working on further strengthening this element to improve the institute process in the country.

There was one training last year at the national level for all coordinators from regional to cluster level with their assistants with the aim of strengthening coordination for the expansion and sustainability of the educational process. Also invited to this training were Regional Baha'i Council secretaries and Area Teaching Committee secretaries or growth facilitators. Auxiliary Board members were not left out. This afforded all present to look at the two perspectives and what each institution and agency is expected to do in enhancing a healthy pattern of growth in the clusters or neighbourhoods.

There was no regional reflection of coordinators in the outgoing year but there were regular coordinators' meeting in Lagos, Calabar and Unity clusters. Reflection among tutors, animators and teachers was not regular in most of the advanced clusters. The Boards are working on regularizing these spaces which are necessary for the capacity building of available human resources as well as improving the quality of the educational process.

Training

Training as a means of developing and building capacity of interested friends to walk the path of service is one of the vital elements of the institute process. The outgoing year witnessed less training as compared to previous years. The tabular presentation of projected goals and achievements will throw more light on this. Numerous factors contributed to this drop in the development of human resources as well as accompanying them to walk the path of service. Strategies are put in place to intensify effort in this direction in the remaining twelve months of the current Five Year Plan. The Boards cannot achieve this alone without

the support and collaboration of all the institutions and agencies involved in the implementation of the provisions of the Divine Plan. As stated in Ridván Message 2015 of the Universal House of Justice to the Baha'is of the world: "**Now is not the moment for any soul to linger upon the bank-let all lend themselves to the onward surge."**

The two tables below show goals projected and achievements for **2013/2014 and 2014/2015** respectively. This is focusing mainly on study circles, junior youth groups and children's classes.

Table 1- 2013/2014

Core Activities	***April 2013 statistics***		***2013/2014 Goals Projected***		***Achievement as of April 30th 2014***	
	No	***Participants***	***No***	***Participants***	***No***	***Participants***
Study Circle	***194***	***337***	***138***	***432***	***54***	***358***
Junior Youth Groups	***151***	***1705***	***287***	***2910***	***151***	***1368***
Children's Classes Grade1	***113***	***1387***	***169***	***1380***	***111***	***1263***
Grade 2	***22***	***203***	***35***	***200***	***27***	***206***
Grade 3	***0***	***0***	***27***	***162***	***3***	***31***
TOTAL	***480***	***3632***	***656***	***5084***	***346***	***3226***

Table 2- 2015/2016

Core Activities	***April 2014 statistics***		***2014/2015 Goals Projected***		***Achievement as of April 30th 2015***	
	No	***Participants***	***No***	***Participants***	***No***	***Participants***
Study Circle	***54***	***358***	***274***	***1343***	***27***	***143***
Junior Youth Groups	***151***	***1368***	***500***	***5040***	***134***	***1395***
Children's Classes Grade1	***111***	***1263***	***278***	***2780***	***67***	***877***

Grade 2	***27***	***206***	***51***	***625***	***11***	***130***
Grade 3	***3***	***31***	***25***	***250***	***3***	***34***
TOTAL	***346***	***3226***	***1128***	***10038***	***242***	***2579***

Table 2 above shows a huge drop in the number of core activities and human resources as compared to last year. Also goals set were far from being achieved. One of the greatest challenges contributing to this is lack of consistency by the trained human resources in facilitating the corresponding core activities due to mobility, education, job searching as well as parents and community distractions. The challenge of taking ownership of the community building process by the communities themselves is another factor. We have to do more on elevating our conversations with the youth and the community to raise their understanding and expand their consciousness about the community building process so that they can support and take ownership. This will surely reduce the depletion in human resources and core activities.

The outgoing year as we said earlier did not witness much on training due to; learning how to decentralize training, Ebola outbreak, the fear of Boko Haram menace which prevented the mobilization of youth for training and the general elections. We are going to double our efforts in this last part of the Five Year Plan.

Learning Site

Learning Site is key to the strengthening of the educational process. It primary function is that of giving support to the institutes by focussing on the development and systematization of the junior youth empowerment programme in some selected clusters. The Site does this by organizing seminars and training, accompaniment of cluster coordinators attached to the Site as well as the generation and dissemination of learning. Three clusters in Nigeria are currently accompanied by the Site situated in Ghana which covers the five English speaking West African countries where Nigeria falls within. These clusters are Calabar, Lagos and Unity. Coordinators in these clusters attended training seminar once in the outgoing year focusing on increasing and improving the quality of the junior youth spiritual empowerment programme by working with core group of dedicated animators as well as collaborating with other cluster institutions and agencies. Some regional institute coordinators also attended.

One of the resource persons coordinating the site programmes and accompaniment visited Nigeria in the outgoing year to work with these coordinators from the three clusters attached to the site based on plans they made at the seminar. The resource person spent over a month helping in strengthening the junior youth programme in the country by accompanying the cluster coordinators and their assistants.

Insights gained

- We are beginning to see sustainability of core activities in some neighbourhoods where parents are supporting the efforts of the youth.
- When neighbourhood training is carried out after spending some quality time entering into meaningful conversation with the youth, parents and community leaders, commitment to service and communal support is assured.
- Mobilization for training done by existing animators, teachers and tutors seems to be more productive and sustainable.
- When responsibilities are assigned to coordinators based on their strength, they do it with joy and enthusiasm
- The Boards' analysis of coordinators' plans and reports gives a sense of focus to the coordinators and makes accompaniment purposeful

Conclusion

The Institute Boards appreciates the efforts of all the Coordinators, facilitators of core activities and their collaborators. We know that our gaols were not met but we are not deterred by the prevailing situation in our country. If others in a more unfriendly condition and environment with limited resources can do it, it means we can also do it if we rededicate ourselves and be more systematic. Once again we will like to quote from the Ridván 2015 Message of the House of Justice which says**: "We wish to address some additional words to those of you in whose surroundings marked progress is yet to occur and who long for change. Have hope. It will not always be so. Is not the history of our Faith filled with accounts of inauspicious beginnings but marvellous results? How many times have the deeds of a few believers- young or old-or of a single family, or even of a lone soul, when confirmed by the power of divine assistance, succeeded in cultivating vibrant communities in seemingly inhospitable climes? Do not imagine that your own case is inherently any different. Change in a cluster, be it swift or hard won, flows neither from a formulaic approach nor from random activity; it proceeds to the rhythm of action, reflection and**

consultation, and is propelled by plans that are the fruit of experience.”

Thank You All!

ZABI & ENI INSTITUTE BOARDS- NIGERIA